

Today, the long-promised lobbying reform bills came to the House floor. H.R. 2317, the Lobbying Transparency Act, closes a disclosure loophole that allows campaign donors to remain anonymous when lobbyists "bundle" their contributions. We changed the bill on the House floor to strengthen the bill, which included an amendment from Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX) applying bundling rules to political campaign committees. Successful passage by a 382-37 margin proves that there is a strong bipartisan majority now backing ethics reforms. Too bad the Rules committee would not permit a vote on the Kirk amendment that would kill the pensions of Members of Congress convicted of a felony. It is a reform that is long past due.

An additional bill, H.R. 2316, the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act, includes common-sense reforms designed to limit lobbyists' influence on Congress through:

- Prohibiting members or senior congressional staff from negotiating for a lobbying job while they are still on the public payroll.
- Requiring lobbyists to file quarterly reports with the clerk of the House detailing the contacts they have made with congressional offices, as well as the contributions they make.
- Preventing congressional staff contact with a member's spouse, if the spouse is employed as a lobbyist.

We also passed an amendment proposed by Rep. Steve Chabot (R-OH) that 1) eliminates a loophole in the House gift rule for state and local government entities, 2) protects against lobbyists who come to work for Congress as staff from giving special treatment to their former clients, and 3) requires registered lobbyists to report Congressional earmarks for which they lobby. H.R. 2316 passed by a vote of 396-22. I am proud to have been part of two overwhelming bipartisan majorities voting to curtail the influence of lobbyists on Capitol Hill.